

**ATTACHMENT  
ACCOMPANYING THE STATEMENT OF  
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DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION**

**DRUG THREATS AND ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES**

**April 2007**

**I. Drug Threats to the United States**

**A. Methamphetamine**

Methamphetamine is the most widely abused and most frequently clandestinely produced synthetic drug<sup>1</sup> in the United States. Methamphetamine appeals to people across all genders, ages, and socio-economic levels. Methamphetamine has a high rate of addiction, a low rate of sustained recovery, and is cheap to manufacture. It devastates users, their families, and local communities. According to the 2005 *National Survey on Drug Use and Health* (NSDUH), 512,000 persons 12 and older used methamphetamine during the past 30 days (an eighteen percent decrease from 2003) and 1.3 million have used it in the past year, virtually the same number as in 2003. The estimated number of past year methamphetamine users is nearly three and one half times the number of estimated past year heroin users. In FY 2006, DEA domestic seizures of methamphetamine totaled 2.1 metric tons. Super lab seizures in the United States were reduced by 86 percent through increased enforcement efforts, from 244 in calendar year (CY) 2001 to 35 in CY 2005. The total number of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories seized nationally also decreased, from 10,212 in CY 2003 (the highest total from 2001 to 2005) to 5,840 in CY 2005 (43 percent). Of the 2,134 clandestine methamphetamine laboratories seized nationally so far in CY 2006, only 17 are classified as “super labs.” Seizures of methamphetamine along the Southwest Border of the U.S. and Mexico have increased 129 percent, from 1,170 kilograms in CY 2001 to 2,679 kilograms in CY 2005.

By effectively targeting and arresting the main suppliers of bulk precursor chemicals, DEA has successfully reduced the number of super labs<sup>2</sup> in the United States. As a consequence, operators of super labs have shifted their production to Mexico. Current drug and lab seizure data suggests that approximately 80 percent of the methamphetamine used in the United States originates from larger laboratories operated by Mexican-based syndicates on both sides of the border, and that approximately 20 percent of the methamphetamine consumed comes from small toxic labs (STLs) in the

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘synthetic drugs’ refers to controlled substances such as methamphetamine, MDMA “ecstasy” (and its analogues), GHB (and its analogues), ketamine, and other substances, which are not of primarily organic origin and are usually associated with clandestine manufacture.

<sup>2</sup> “Super labs” are those labs that are capable of producing at least 10 pounds of methamphetamine per cycle.

United States. STLs generally are unaffiliated with major drug trafficking organizations, but nevertheless present enormous environmental challenges. In recent years, the proliferation of STLs has been fueled by the ready availability of pseudoephedrine, the key ingredient in methamphetamine and by the fact that the manufacturing process is simple, inexpensive, and recipes can be found easily on the Internet. Super lab seizures in the United States declined by 86 percent through increased enforcement efforts, from 244 in calendar year (CY) 2001 to 35 in CY 2005. The total number of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories seized nationally also decreased, from 10,212 in CY 2003 (the highest total from 2001 to 2005) to 5,840 in CY 2005 (43 percent). Of the 2,134 clandestine methamphetamine laboratories seized nationally so far in CY 2006, only 17 are classified as “super labs.”

The most promising means of eliminating STLs is to cut off their supply of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. DEA has removed a number of distributors of grey market drug products (those that can be purchased at truck stops, party/liquor stores, etc.) from the marketplace. Following DEA’s success with removing grey market distributors, STLs have become heavily reliant on obtaining precursor chemicals from cold and asthma drug products (usually packaged in blister packs) from traditional retail outlets, such as chain drug stores. Based on clandestine lab seizure statistics, those states restricting the availability of methamphetamine precursor chemicals, like pseudoephedrine, have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of STLs. Implementing the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 will further help reduce the number of STLs as it makes pseudoephedrine and ephedrine more difficult to obtain.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – August 2006 – DEA arrested 28 members of two separate cocaine trafficking organizations which were simultaneously distributing methamphetamine in Henderson and Caldwell Counties, North Carolina. The arrests concluded ten-month and 15-month Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigations that resulted in the dismantlement of the Juan LOPEZ and the Lewis CASAS methamphetamine trafficking organizations. The two organizations were responsible for the distribution of five kilograms of methamphetamine per month in the western part of North Carolina. To date, these two OCDETF investigations have resulted in 47 arrests, including LOPEZ and CASAS, 37 repeat offenders, and the seizure of more than one kilogram of methamphetamine, approximately \$50,000 U.S. currency, and six weapons.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – May 2006 – DEA and the FBI arrested 27 individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of two crystal methamphetamine trafficking organizations. During the past ten years, the Rafael RAMIREZ organization was responsible for the distribution of approximately 100 pounds of crystal methamphetamine on a monthly basis from Mexico to the San Francisco area. The RAMIREZ organization supplied methamphetamine to the Kasi POHAHAU organization which, during the past ten years, was responsible for the distribution of more than 50 pounds of crystal methamphetamine from San Francisco to Hawaii. This three-year OCDETF investigation has resulted in the arrest of 37 individuals,

including RAMIREZ and POHAHAU, and the seizure of 42 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, 52 kilograms of cocaine, and \$1.4 million in U.S. currency.

## **B. Non-medical use of prescription drugs**

Non-medical use of addictive prescription drugs has been increasing throughout the United States at alarming rates. In CY 2005, an estimated 6.4 million<sup>3</sup> Americans age 12 and older reported past month use of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes compared to 3.8 million in CY 2000<sup>4</sup> – a 68 percent increase in 5 years. Nationally, the misuse of prescription drugs was second only to marijuana in CY 2005.

Individual users can easily acquire prescription drugs through a variety of means, generally dependent on the type of drug. DEA and other data sources reveal that OxyContin<sup>®</sup> and other Schedule II drugs are most commonly obtained illegally through “doctor shopping” or are sold illegally by registrants (e.g., doctors/pharmacists). On the other hand, Schedule III and Schedule IV drugs (e.g., anti-anxiety medications, hydrocodone, and anabolic steroids) are often purchased through the Internet. Many of these pharmacies are foreign-based and expose the purchaser to potentially counterfeit, contaminated, or adulterated products.

DEA targets its investigations on domestic Internet pharmacies using data from available data bases, such as the Automated Reporting of Completed Orders System (ARCOS), to determine which retail pharmacies are most likely involved in distribution of large quantities of controlled substances over the Internet. In FY 2006, 14.7 percent of investigative work hours dedicated to open diversion cases were Internet cases. This is an increase of 27.9 percent from FY 2005 when Internet cases represented 11.3 percent of the investigative work hours dedicated to open diversion cases, and an increase of 50 percent from FY 2004 when 8.8 percent of case work hours were for Internet cases.

During FY 2006, DEA has initiated over 218 investigations of online sales of controlled pharmaceuticals without a prescription. As a result of Internet investigations, DEA seized approximately \$4.9 million in cash, bank accounts, property, and computers during FY 2006.

In FY 2004, DEA established a specialized section within its Special Operations Division (SOD) to coordinate multi-jurisdictional Title III investigations involving the diversion of pharmaceuticals and chemicals over the Internet. During FY 2006, DEA has coordinated over 90 Internet investigations, resulting in the arrest of approximately 128 individuals and the seizure of approximately 14 million dosage units of controlled substances and approximately \$52.6 million in U.S. currency.

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2006). Results from the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2002). National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Vol 1. Summary of National Findings.

In 2006, DEA continued to enhance the Online Investigations Project (OIP), which improves DEA's ability to systematically identify, investigate, and prosecute the owners and operators of rogue pharmacies using the Internet to divert controlled substances. During FY 2006, the OIP Configuration Control Board authorized the release of 71 change request items. These improvements made significant changes to the functionality of the OIP system, which enabled Diversion Staff Coordinators assigned to Intelligence to provide effective, ongoing support of significant Internet investigations. The system has also been utilized to provide pertinent Internet data in furtherance of ongoing Internet investigations in the field, as well as to provide new tips and leads. Since the inception of the OIP Web-Check process in March 2005, Web-Checks were performed on 2,425 web sites and e-mail addresses as a result of 455 requests.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – January 2007 – DEA arrested four individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of the Andrew RUSSO internet pharmaceutical drug trafficking organization. The RUSSO organization used illicit internet websites to sell controlled substances directly to consumers without a physician's medical evaluation. From July to December 2005, the RUSSO organization distributed over one million tablets of alprazolam, and six million tablets of phentermine through its two internet pharmacies, United Care Pharmacy and Kwic-Fill. In addition to the arrests, this 20-month Priority Target Organization (PTO) investigation has resulted in the seizure of \$2,000,415 in U.S. currency, 11 vehicles valued at \$700,000, and the possible forfeiture of real estate valued at \$1.5 million.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – December 2006 – DEA arrested seven individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of the Antonio QUINONES internet pharmaceutical drug trafficking organization. The QUINONES organization used illicit internet websites to sell controlled substances directly to consumers without a physician's medical evaluation. During the past two years, the QUINONES organization shipped more than one million dosage units of Vicodin and amphetamines per month from Miami, Florida, to locations throughout the United States. In addition to the arrests, this one-year OCDETF investigation has resulted in the seizure of \$935,000 in U.S. currency, real estate valued at \$4.2 million, two vehicles valued at \$350,000, a watercraft valued at \$650,000, and two firearms. The DEA conducted this investigation with the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Marshals Service.

### **C. Cocaine**

Cocaine remains a major illegal drug of concern throughout the United States based upon abuse indicators, violence associated with the trade, and trafficking volume. After marijuana, cocaine continues to be the most widely used illicit drug among all age categories. The 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) found that 2.4 million Americans used cocaine within the past 30 days and that over 5.5 million Americans used it within the past year. According to the 2004 Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) report, cocaine is the most frequently reported illegal drug in hospital

emergency room visits, accounting for 1 in 5 (19 percent) drug related emergency room visits in CY 2004.<sup>5</sup>

Although Colombia is the principal source of cocaine distributed in the United States, most of the wholesale cocaine distribution in the United States is controlled by Mexican drug trafficking organizations and criminal enterprises. Even in areas dominated by Colombian and Dominican drug trafficking organizations, such as the Northeast and Caribbean regions, the influence of Mexican drug trafficking organizations is increasing.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – September 2006 – Consolidated Priority Organization Targets (CPOTs) Miguel and Gilberto RODRIGUEZ-OREJUELA pled guilty in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida to conspiracy to import cocaine, and agreed to plead guilty in the Southern District of New York to conspiracy to commit money laundering. Each brother was sentenced to thirty years in prison. The brothers also agreed to the entry of a \$2.1 billion judgment of forfeiture, and the forfeiture of 287 properties. Twenty-eight family members have also agreed to these forfeitures. The RODRIGUEZ-OREJUELA brothers ran the Cali Cartel in Colombia, and since 1990 imported and distributed more than 200,000 kilograms of cocaine from Colombia to the United States.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – May 2006 – the Brazilian Federal Police arrested CPOT Pablo RAYO Montano in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and in an operation coordinated by DEA, law enforcement teams in four U.S. cities and five foreign countries arrested 52 individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of the RAYO Montano cocaine trafficking organization. RAYO Montano started in the narcotics business as a transporter in Buenaventura, Colombia approximately 20 years ago. In the last four years alone, the RAYO Montano organization has been responsible for the transportation of 15 tons of cocaine per month from South America to the United States and Europe. RAYO Montano has been linked to the notorious Norte del Valle Cartel, the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) paramilitary organization, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) terrorist organization, and corrupt high-level officials in the Colombian government. On February 22 and March 3, 2006, federal grand juries in the District of Columbia and the Southern District of Florida, respectively, indicted RAYO Montano on money laundering and cocaine trafficking charges. The indictments were the result of *Operation Twin Oceans*, a three-year OCDETF investigation supported by the DEA Special Operations Division. *Operation Twin Oceans* has resulted in 138 arrests and the seizure of 47,550 kilograms of cocaine, 700 pounds of marijuana, ten kilograms of heroin, \$1.6 million dollars in U.S. currency, and other assets with a total estimated value of \$47 million, including three islands near the coast of Panama.

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Detailed Emergency Department Tables from DAWN: 2004. April 2006.

## D. Heroin

The overall demand for heroin in the United States is lower than for other major drugs of abuse such as cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine.<sup>6</sup> However, one cause for concern is the recent increase in heroin usage. According to the 2005 NSDUH, 379,000 people aged 12 and older reported using heroin during the past 30 days in CY 2005; a slight decrease from 398,000 in CY 2004.<sup>7</sup> Heroin remains readily available in major metropolitan areas and is the third most frequently mentioned illegal drug reported to DAWN by participating emergency departments after cocaine and marijuana, accounting for 162,137 mentions in CY 2004.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the heroin entering the United States is produced in South America and Mexico. Although heroin production in these areas has decreased in recent years, the production capacity remains sufficient to meet U.S. demand for the drug.<sup>9</sup> In 2004, Afghanistan produced more than 90 percent of the world's heroin supply.<sup>10</sup> However, Afghanistan is not currently a major heroin supplier to the United States; only about eight percent of the U.S. supply comes from that country. The majority of the heroin entering the United States is produced in Colombia and Mexico.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – November 2006 – DEA arrested seven individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of the Shakur MUHAMMAD heroin trafficking organization. This organization distributed fentanyl-laced heroin, brand named "Get High or Die Trying" and "Burn Out," which was directly responsible for six deaths and 27 overdoses. During the past two years, the MUHAMMAD organization distributed over three kilograms of heroin per month in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area. This six-month OCDETF investigation has resulted in the arrest of nine individuals, including MUHAMMAD, and the seizure of one kilogram of heroin and two firearms.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – June 2006 – DEA arrested 12 individuals in Las Vegas, Nevada, Palm Springs, California, Caguas, Puerto Rico, and New York City, resulting in the dismantlement of the Javier MONROY heroin trafficking organization. Since 2004, the MONROY organization has been responsible for importing more than 200 kilograms of heroin into the United States. MONROY is a former Bogotá, Colombia police officer. The MONROY organization used couriers to smuggle heroin from several foreign countries, including Ecuador, Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico, to New York for distribution. The organization employed more than a dozen drug couriers, many of whom made multiple drug trips and most of whom were based in the Las Vegas area. Typically,

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2006). Results from the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Detailed Emergency Department Tables from DAWN: 2004. April 2006.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center. (2006). 2006 National Drug Threat Assessment.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

the drug couriers smuggled between three to five kilograms of heroin per trip concealed within the lining of clothes. To date, this ten-month OCDETF investigation has resulted in the arrest of 22 individuals, including MONROY, and the seizure of 28 kilograms of heroin and \$220,000 in U.S. currency.

## **E. Marijuana**

Marijuana continues to be a significant threat. The 2005 NSDUH found that marijuana was the most commonly used illicit drug with 14.6 million users (6.1 percent of the population 12 and older) during the past month in CY 2004 – the same as in CY 2003.<sup>11</sup> More teens seek treatment for marijuana dependency than for all other drugs combined including alcohol, and marijuana was involved in 215,665 emergency department visits<sup>12</sup> in CY 2004, second only to cocaine among drug-related visits.<sup>13</sup>

Marijuana trafficking is prevalent across the nation, with both domestic and foreign sources of supply. The most recent supply availability estimates indicate that between 10,000 and 24,000 pure metric tons of marijuana are available in the United States,<sup>14</sup> and that Americans spend more than \$10.4 billion every year on marijuana.<sup>15</sup> Since the demand for marijuana far exceeds that for any other illegal drug and the profit potential is so high, some cocaine and heroin drug trafficking organizations traffic marijuana to help finance their other drug operations.

Mexican drug trafficking organizations dominate the transportation and wholesale distribution of the majority of foreign-based marijuana available in the United States and cultivate marijuana on U.S. public lands throughout California. High grade marijuana from Canada, commonly referred to as “BC Bud,” is also available in every region of the United States.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – December 2006 – DEA arrested two individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of the Shon SQUIRE marijuana trafficking organization. During the past 18 months, the SQUIRE organization distributed 300 pounds of marijuana per month through its store, the Local Patient Cooperative, which was granted a permit to operate as a medical dispensary by the city of Hayward, California. The store serviced 200 customers per day, purchasing marijuana at \$4,000 per pound and selling it at \$6,500 per pound, in various products and quantities, for a gross profit of \$750,000 per month. In addition to the arrests, this one-year investigation resulted in the seizure of 725 marijuana plants, \$2 million in U. S. currency, five luxury vehicles and five firearms.

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<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2006). Results from the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

<sup>12</sup> A visit to the emergency room is referred to as an episode, and every time a drug is involved in an episode it is counted as a mention.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Detailed Emergency Department Tables from DAWN: 2004. April 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Drug Availability Steering Committee, Drug Availability Estimates in the United States, December 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Control Policy. What Americans Spend on Illegal Drugs 1988-1998. December 2000.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – September 2006 – DEA arrested 30 individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of the Manuel CARO marijuana trafficking organization. During the past 18 months, the CARO organization distributed 1,000 pounds of marijuana per month in Florida, New Jersey and New York. To date, this six-month OCDETF investigation has resulted in the arrest of 60 individuals, including CARO, and the seizure of 4,000 pounds of marijuana, \$170,000 in U.S. currency, and a large amount of sophisticated indoor hydroponic grow equipment. Additionally, sixty residential properties are being reviewed for possible forfeiture action.

## **II. Enforcement Challenges**

### **A. Transit Zones**

The Southwest Border area is the principal arrival zone for most illicit drugs smuggled into the United States. From that area, the smuggled drugs are distributed throughout the country.

Most cocaine is transported from South America, particularly Colombia, through the Mexico–Central America Corridor via the Eastern Pacific transit zone (50 percent) and the Western Caribbean zone (40 percent). Most of the cocaine transiting these two areas is ultimately smuggled into the country via the Southwest Border. The remaining 10 percent of cocaine transported from South America mostly transits the Caribbean zones to Florida and the Gulf Coast.

According to the 2006 *National Drug Threat Assessment*, methamphetamine seizures increased from 1.12 metric tons in CY 2002, to 1.73 metric tons in CY 2003, to 1.98 metric tons in CY 2004. Most of the foreign-produced marijuana available in the United States is smuggled into the country from Mexico via the Southwest Border by Mexican drug trafficking organizations and criminal groups, as evidenced by CY 2004 seizures of 1,103 metric tons on the Southwest Border versus 9.2 metric tons on the Northern Border.

In CY 2004, seizures for Southwest Border points of entry included 22.4 metric tons of cocaine, 388 kilograms of heroin, 1,070 metric tons of marijuana, and 2.3 metric tons of methamphetamine. By comparison, seizures in the Florida/Caribbean arrival zone for the same time period included 10.5 metric tons of cocaine, 481 kilograms of heroin, 4.9 metric tons of marijuana and no methamphetamine.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – August 2005 through October 2005 – DEA oversaw *Operation All Inclusive (OAI) 2005-1*, the first initiative under the DEA-developed, multi-agency International Drug Flow Prevention Strategy. This strategy is designed to cause major disruption to the flow of drugs, money, and chemicals between source zones and the United States through the execution of joint enforcement operations that attack the main arteries and support infrastructure nodes of the drug trade. *OAI*



2005-1 focused on a predictive intelligence-based attack of the maritime, land, financial, and air smuggling vulnerabilities of drug trafficking organizations operating within the Mexico/Central America corridor. *OAI 2005-1*'s success included nearly 47 metric tons of cocaine seized, which equates to 5 to 10 percent of the estimated quantity of cocaine that was transported through the transit zones to the United States during all of 2005. Additionally, during the 65-day period of the operation, total cocaine seizures in the Mexico/Central American and Caribbean Corridors increased 119 percent compared to the 65-day period preceding the operation, from 36 metric tons to 79 metric tons. At the same time, cocaine seizures by DEA domestic offices decreased 29 percent compared to the 65-day period prior to the operation, from 31,789 kilograms to 22,669 kilograms. Further, as a result of the operation, drug trafficking organizations were forced to delay or suspend their drug operations, divert their routes, change their modes of transportation, and jettison loads. Other results include 346 arrests and additional seizures of 88.56 kilograms of heroin, 26.28 metric tons of marijuana, 990,200 tablets of pseudoephedrine, \$16 million in currency, and 104 weapons.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – March 2006 through April 2006 – Building upon some of the lessons learned from *OAI 2005-1*, the second initiative under the highly effective International Drug Flow Prevention Strategy, *OAI 2006-1*, was conducted. *OAI 2006-1* was comprised of a combination of staggered and simultaneous land, air, maritime, and financial attacks involving synchronized interagency counter drug operations designed to influence illicit trafficking patterns and increase disruptions of drug trafficking organizations. Some of the successes for *OAI 2006-1* include over 130 arrests and the seizure of 43.77 metric tons of cocaine; 19.65 metric tons of marijuana; 83.6 kilograms of heroin; 92.6 metric tons of precursor chemicals; and \$4,079,894 U.S. currency. During the course of both *OAI* initiatives, DEA was able to determine through intelligence sources that traffickers postponed or canceled their operations, modified their methods of conveyance, varied smuggling routes, and jettisoned loads as a result of enforcement efforts.

## **B. Gangs**

Gangs have become an increasing and pervasive threat to our nation's security and the safety of our communities. Seventy-five percent of the United States Attorneys report that parts of their districts currently have a moderate or significant gang problem. Gangs commonly use drug trafficking as a means to finance their criminal activities. Furthermore, many have evolved from turf-oriented entities to profit-driven, organized criminal enterprises whose activities include not only retail drug distribution but also other aspects of the trade, including smuggling, transportation and wholesale distribution.

Criminal street gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, and prison gangs are the primary retail distributors of illegal drugs on the streets of the United States and the threat of these gangs is magnified by the high level of violence associated with their attempts to control and expand drug distribution operations. Gangs primarily transport and distribute cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine. Authorities throughout the country

report that gangs are responsible for most of the serious violent crime in the major cities of the United States.

DEA is committed to combating the gang problem within the United States. The agency targets gang drug trafficking activity through participation in a number of anti-gang initiatives with other law enforcement components, such as Violent Crime Impact Teams, Project Safe Neighborhoods, Weed and Seed Program, Safe Streets and Safe Trails Task Forces and the Attorney General's Anti-Gang Coordination Committee. In 2006, DEA targeted violent drug gangs, such as the Hell's Angels, Latin Kings, Bloods, Gangster Disciples, and Crips. Through state and local partnerships, DEA is able to target violent drug trafficking organizations in areas where state, local, and tribal law enforcement is challenged. In FY 2006, DEA initiated 31 deployments to state and local jurisdictions. Of these, nine (29 percent) were gang related. Additionally, 6 percent (117) of DEA's total active PTO investigations (2,113) were gang-involved. There was a 36 percent increase in active PTO cases involving gangs (from 86 in FY 2005 to 117 in FY 2006); 57 percent increase in cases initiated (from 56 in FY 2005 to 88 in FY 2006); 120 percent increase in PTOs disrupted (from 10 in FY 2005 to 22 in FY 2006); and 57 percent increase in PTOs dismantled (from 23 in FY 2005 to 36 in FY 2006).

**DEA Operational Highlight** – February 2007 – DEA arrested 47 individuals, resulting in the disruption of the Laton Spurgeon crack cocaine and heroin trafficking organization. Since August 2005, the Spurgeon organization distributed one kilogram of crack cocaine and six ounces of heroin per month at the Hamel Housing Projects, a New York City Housing Authority complex in Queens, New York. Sixteen of the defendants were charged with at least one count of selling drugs within a drug-free school zone. In addition to the arrests, this four-month PTO investigation resulted in the seizure of two firearms.

**DEA Operational Highlight** – May 2006 – DEA arrested 23 individuals, resulting in the dismantlement of the Winfred Lorenzo HUNT and Carlton POTTS crack cocaine trafficking organization. During the past three years, the HUNT/POTTS organization was responsible for the distribution of 8 - 12 kilograms of cocaine per month in Palm Beach County, Florida. HUNT has been arrested 27 times previously and charged with several violent crimes, including attempted murder. POTTS' record includes 30 prior arrests on charges such as battery on a police officer, aggravated assault, and attempted murder. Among those arrested was an employee of the Palm Beach State Attorney's Office who utilized her position to provide law enforcement information to the HUNT/POTTS organization. To date, this 15-month OCDETF investigation has resulted in the arrest of 53 individuals, including HUNT and POTTS, and the seizure of more than one kilogram of crack cocaine and two kilograms of powder cocaine, \$172,000 in U.S. currency, and eight handguns.